III.

History of a Case, in which remarkable Adhesions of the Intestinal Canal, terminated fatally. By Dr Andrew Williſon, *Physician in Dundee.*

BARBARA SHARPE, aged seventeen years, of a florid healthy complexion, and robuſt conſtitution, was seized suddenly, on Sunday 23d May laſt, with acute pains all over her abdomen, but more particularly in the left hypochondrium, and ſmall of her back. Theſe continued to increaſe in ſeverity till Monday 31ſt, when I was deſired to viſit her.

She had always enjoyed exceeding good health, never having had any complaint, except that, about two months previous to this attack, ſhe had got a fright, that had occaſioned a ſuppreſſion of the menſtrual diſcharge. which had not again returned.

I found her in very great agony, from the ſharp pains in her bowels, which ſhe could compare to nothing elſe but the piercing of ſwords. She could not ly long in one poſture; but was continually toſſing and rolling about in the bed. Her belly was ſomewhat ſwelled. It felt hard and tenſe, though no fluctuation was perceptible to the touch. The ſwelling extended upwards to the cartilago enſiformis. A hard tumour was diſtinctly felt in the left hypochondrium, which ſhe could not ſuffer to be preſſed. She complained conſtantly of nauſea, and inclination to vomit; ſo that nothing ſhe ſwallowed had been retained on her ſtomach for any length of time. She had been obſtinately coſtive for ſome days, and had taken a few aloetic pills, but with no effect. Her urine was ſcanty, of a deep red colour, with a lateritious ſediment. Her thirſt was great, and ſhe had entirely loſt her appetite. Pulſe ſmall, hard, and rather quick.

I firſt took twelve ounces of blood from her arm, which appeared to indicate an inflammatory diatheſis. I then directed the following nitrous purging powder to be taken, and to be repeated four hours after, if neceſſary.

℞ Pulv.

℞ Pulv. Julap. drach. ſs.
—— Crem. Tart.
—— Sal. Nitri *aa.* gr. xv. M. p. d.

Water-gruel, acidulated according to her taſte with lemon juice, was ordered for common drink; and a large bliſter was applied on the left ſide of her belly.

June 1ſt. She had one large ſtool after the ſecond doſe of the powder, and complained of much nauſea afterwards. The bliſter had riſen well, but had produced no mitigation of the pains, which continued as intenſe as ever. She had frequent vomiting, eſpecially on taking down ever ſo little food. Her belly was always bound. Two table-ſpoonfuls of a ſaline julep, with twenty drops of laudanum in each doſe of the julep, was ordered to be taken every two hours, and an ounce of caſtor-oil at bed-time.

2*d.* She felt no alleviation of ſymptoms; and the conſtant retching continued. What ſhe vomited was exceedingly bitter, and had a yellow appearance. The julep had cauſed no abatement of the pains in her bowels; and it was repeatedly thrown up, along with much bilious matter. The caſtor-oil was likewiſe rejected. Fomentations and the warm bath,

in various forms, were then tried; but were uſed without affording the ſmalleſt relief. The ſwelling of the abdomen rather increaſes.

Repr. Julap. cum additione Spt. Nitri dulc. drach. ii. A laxative injection to be given in the evening.

3*d*. She ſlept very ill. Two purging injections were exhibited laſt night, without effect. She complains of gripes, nauſea, and intolerable bitter taſte in her mouth. Omitr. Julap. anod. Cap. Decoct. Tamarind. cum triplice Senna unc. iii. omn. hor. ad 4m. vicem, donec alvus dejecerit.

4*th*. No effect was obtained, but vomiting, from every doſe of the purgative. Pulſe, nauſea, and coſtiveneſs, as formerly. She complains much of the pains in her bowels. Repr. enema purgans veſp. et capt. cras mane Bolum ex P. Jalapp. dr. i. Calomel. gr. v. cum Conſ. Roſar.

6*th*. The injection had no effect, though tried in different forms: ſome obſtruction in the gut prevented its being thrown up, as it always returned immediately. Some ſmall effect from the bolus. Abdomen ſtill hard and tenſe—

tenſe—Fricetur probe cum ol. camphorat. mane et veſp.

8*th*. Symptoms continue with unabated violence. Vomiting of bilious matter inceſſant.

℞ Laud. liquid.
Æth. Vitriol.
Spt. Nitr. Dulc. *aa*. drach. iii. M. Capt. cochleare parvulum omn. bihor. ex aq. font. unc. ii.

10*th*. She had taken an emetic of powder of ipecacuanha yeſterday, and had drunk largely of an infuſion of chamomile. The nauſea and retchings, however, continue to day, as formerly. Obſtinate coſtiveneſs remains. No ſenſible effect from the antiſpaſmodic drops. Omittr. Guttæ. Some obſcure fluctuation is perceived in the abdomen for the firſt time. Habt. Bol. Mercur. ut antea. Contr. ol. Camph.

11*th*. Some ſlight operation from the Bolus, which was retained. Urine grows more turbid and ſcanty. Thirſt increaſes.

℞ Pulv. Scillæ ſiccat. gr. ii.
—— Diaromat. gr. iv.
—— Sal Nitri gr. x. M. p. d. f. vi. huj. cupt. i. omn. 6ta. hor. ex Julap. ſalin.

ſalin. unc. ii. Habt. hauſt. anod. h. ſ. ex aq. Cinnam. ten. unc. i. cum Laud. liquid. gtt. L.

13*th*. Retained ſeveral of her powders, which operated twice yeſterday. She threw up her anodyne draught both the nights. Omr. hauſt. anod. Habt. hauſt. ſalin. inter efferveſcentiam. Contr. ol. camphorat.

15*th*. No obvious effect, in ſtopping the vomiting, was produced from the efferveſcing draughts. No remiſſion of ſymptoms has taken place. Omr. hauſt. ſalin. Repr. Pulv. diuret. et Julap. ſalin.

17*th*. The powders were all taken; but without their former good effect. Repeated retchings followed every doſe of them. She has conſiderable bilious vomiting to-day. Repr. Bolus Mercur. mane ſumendus. Conr. ol. camphorat.

19*th*. Retained her bolus; which, however, has not operated. She complains of gripes. ℞ Sal. Glaub. unc. iſs. Cryſtall. Tartar. unc. ſs. ft. ſolutio in aq. bullient. unc. xii. Capt. unc. iv. om. hor. donec alvus reſponderit.

20*th*. She took three doſes of the ſolution yeſterday, but rejected them all. The pains in her bowels increaſe in ſeverity. No operation

tion from the purgative. Repr. Bolus Mercurialis.

21*ſt*. She threw up her bolus immediately after it was ſwallowed. She obſtinately refuſes to take any more medicines. All the ſymptoms increaſe in virulence. Her fleſh and ſtrength are much waſted. Pulſe regular, but ſinks daily.

22*d*. This day, the matter ſhe vomited, put on a different appearance: From a yellow colour, it aſſumed a dark browniſh hue, as if mixed with grumous blood, and had a fetid ſmell. She threw up near ſix pounds of this coloured matter in the courſe of twenty-four hours. This appearance of the rejected fluid continued till June 30th, when ſhe calmly expired. Some hours previous to her diſſolution, a purging of a black, pitch-like, fetid matter, ſupervened, which occaſioned the ſwelling of her abdomen to ſubſide very conſiderably; and the tumour in the left hypochondrium entirely vaniſhed.

Upon examination of the body after death, (along with my brother Doctor Williſon, who had ſeen her ſeveral times during her illneſs), we found that a very uncommon degree

gree of emaciation had been produced. The cavity of the abdomen contained about ſix pounds of a dark-coloured ſerous fluid. The omentum had been completely waſted; no veſtige of it could be perceived. We were very much ſurpriſed to find, that a *complete adheſion* of all the inteſtines, ſmall and great, had taken place. They had a livid appearance; and they adhered ſo completely, that it would have been impoſſible to have ſeparated them by the niceſt diſſection. Their convolutions even could ſcarcely be traced; and they ſeemed almoſt as if included in a round bag. The liver was not enlarged nor indurated; but a conſiderable number of red and purpliſh ſpots were detected upon its ſurface. The texture of the parenchyma itſelf was ſound; and there were no marks of ſuppuration having occurred in any part of it. The ſtomach was very ſmall and contracted; but the vaſa brevia had a natural appearance. The ſpleen, the gall-bladder, and its veſſels, were of a natural ſize, and in a healthy ſtate.

IV.